

Concussion Prevention Strategies – Students/Athletes

Prior to the beginning of the school year/semester; interschool sport season; and/or intramural activity, students should be informed about:

- concussions
 - definition
 - seriousness of concussions
 - causes
 - signs and symptoms
 - the school board’s Identification procedures and Return to School Plan
- the risks of a concussion associated with the activity/sport and how to minimize those risks including activity/sport-specific prevention strategies;
- the importance of respecting the rules of the game and practising Fair Play (for example, to follow the rules and ethics of play, to practice good sportsmanship at all times and to respect their opponents and officials);
- the dangers of participating in an activity/sport while experiencing the signs and symptoms of a concussion and potential long-term consequences;
- the importance of:
 - immediately informing the teacher/coach/supervisor of any signs or symptoms of a concussion, and removing themselves from the activity/sport;
 - encouraging a teammate with signs or symptoms to remove themselves from the activity/sport and to inform the teacher/coach/supervisor;
 - informing the teacher/coach/supervisor when a classmate/teammate has signs or symptoms of a concussion; and
 - determining that, when students/athletes are permitted to bring their own protective equipment, it is properly fitted (as per manufacturers guidelines), properly worn, in good working order and suitable for personal use.
- the use of helmet when they are required for an activity/sport.

- Helmets do not prevent concussions. They are designed to protect against skull fractures, major brain injuries (including bleeding into or around the brain), brain contusions and lacerations.
- Helmets must be properly fitted (as per manufacturer's guidelines) and properly worn.

During the physical activity unit; interschool sport season; and intramural activity students should be informed about:

- attending safety clinics/information sessions on concussions for the activity/sport;
- be familiar with the seriousness of concussion and the signs and symptoms of concussion;
- demonstrating safe contact skills during controlled practice sessions prior to competition;
- demonstrating respect for the mutual safety of fellow athletes (for example, no hits to the head, follow the rules and regulations of the activity/sport);
- wearing properly fitted protective equipment;
- immediately reporting any sign or symptom of a concussion after a hit, fall or collision to the teacher/coach/supervisor; and
- encouraging teammates/fellow students to report sign(s) or symptom(s) of a concussion and to refrain from pressuring injured students/athletes to play.

Sample strategies/tools to educate students about concussion prevention information:

- Hold a pre-season/-activity group/team meeting on concussion education.
- Develop and distribute an information checklist for students/athletes about prevention strategies.
- Post concussion information to inform/reinforce symptoms and signs and what to do if a concussion is suspected.
- Post information posters on prevention of concussions (for example, encouraging students to report concussion symptoms) in high traffic student areas (for example, change room/locker area/classroom/gymnasium).
- Implement concussion classroom learning modules aligned with the curriculum expectations.
- Distribute concussion fact sheets (prevention, signs and symptoms) for each student/athlete on school teams.

Prior to the interschool sports season students must be (as required by Policy/Program Memorandum No. 158: School Board Policies on Concussion):

- familiar with age appropriate **concussion awareness resources** and complete a process that confirms they have reviewed the information.

- familiar with contents of their Concussion Code of Conduct and complete the process that confirms they have reviewed and will follow the criteria listed.

Students who are absent for safety lessons (for example, information, skills, techniques) must be provided with the information and training prior to the next activity sessions.